

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

The claims have been amended to address comments in the Examiner's Answer and to eliminate issues requiring review. Support for these amendments is found in the specification as filed, for example at paragraph 19 and Figures 1 and 2. No new matter is being added.

The present claims are patentable over Fukuda, US Patent 4904569.

First, the "reversible transmission film" described by Fukuda is not necessarily a saturable absorber. The Examiner concludes that because "the transparency of the reversible transmission film depends upon the quantity of exposure light", the reversible exposure film must exhibit the same qualities as a saturable absorber. This is not necessarily true. It is unclear from Fukuda's description just what the phrase "quantity of light" means. It may, in fact, be a temporal measure of light incident on a film over a particular time period. If so, this is not describing a characteristic that depends on light intensity (as is the case with a saturable absorber). Hence, one cannot conclude that Fukuda's reversible transmission film is equivalent to the claimed saturable absorber.

Second, the reversible transmission layer of Fukuda is limited to enhancing the contrast of a pattern printed on a photoresist layer and does not affect the cross section of a beam. In contrast, the saturable absorber of the present claims allows only a portion of a beam to propagate towards a radiation sensitive layer; where that portion has a cross-section smaller than that of the beam when directed towards the saturable absorber.

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